

Twitterati roast RAG magazine

A racially provocative cover of a student magazine in Cape Town has drawn strong criticism...



(Image extracted from promotional video)

The editorial team of the University of Cape Town's annual RAG magazine *Sax Appeal* was forced to apologise late last week over the cover of the 82-year-old magazine, which includes an article about domestic workers who "steal your jewellery".

It hit the streets on Thursday last week.

Its cover features a picture of a white man holding a whip - in the character of *Fifty Shades of Grey*'s Christian Grey - looking over an informal settlement.

Among those who took offence were singer Simphiwe Dana, who tweeted: "Racism is so tiring. Look at this. White man looking over his dominion."

On the domestic worker article, she tweeted: "The sexual innuendos. The hints of BDSM. Sexual domination of the black body."

Khadija Patel said: "Today's other WTF, UCT students raise money with a mag cover of a white man holding a whip overlooking a CT township."

The magazine's editor, Nabeel Allie, went to ground after Twitter erupted in frenzied reaction, but a statement from the editorial team said the picture was intended to "open up discussion on power relations in South Africa".

"Our intention was not to make light of racism or to humiliate its victims," it said.

The 82-year-old magazine is part of the university's Remember and Give (RAG) week and proceeds from sales are donated to the university's charity, Students Health and Welfare Centres Organisation.

Cartoonist Jonathan Shapiro defended the magazine. "It seems to have a fair degree of substance in trying to tackle real issues."

"Satire is about subverting the order of things and reading between the lines. Not accepting authority at face value," he said.

But Shapiro felt the cover was a failed attempt at satire and said mistakes were inevitable from student magazines.

Several students, who did not want to be named, said the magazine was intentionally controversial and indicative of the black and white culture at UCT.

"This s**t will wake Mandela up," said one of them.

UCT spokesperson Pat Lucas said students had exercised their freedom of speech responsibly.

Source: *The Times*, via I-Net Bridge

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